



# Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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### **TRIP LIMIT REDUCED TO 1,500 POUNDS PER DAY OFF THE FLORIDA EAST COAST FOR VESSELS COMMERCIALY FISHING FOR SPANISH MACKEREL**

Beginning 6:00 a.m. March 1, 2004, the daily vessel trip limit is reduced to 1,500 pounds in the commercial fishery for Atlantic group Spanish mackerel in the southern zone off the Florida east coast. NOAA Fisheries reduced the trip limit after determining that 75 percent, or 2,715,000 pounds, of the adjusted quota (3,620,000 pounds) had been reached (50 CFR 622.44(b)(1)(ii)(C)). The 1,500-pound trip limit is a daily landing/possession limit that applies to commercial vessels fishing for Spanish mackerel in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) between the Florida/Georgia and Miami-Dade/Monroe County, Florida boundaries. Under Florida regulations, a similar 1,500-pound trip limit is effective in adjoining state waters.

The 1,500-pound trip limit will remain in effect until the adjusted quota is reached or through the end of 2003/2004 fishing year, March 31, 2004, whichever occurs first. If commercial landings for the management area (New York - Florida) reach the adjusted quota, the trip limit will be reduced to 500 pounds per day through March 31, 2004. On April 1, 2004, the beginning of the 2004/2005 fishing year, the daily trip limit will increase automatically to 3,500 pounds for every day of the week until unlimited daily harvest/landing begins on December 1, 2004.

Vessels fishing in the EEZ under trip limits and quotas must possess a commercial Federal Spanish mackerel permit. Quotas, trip limits, and permits, implemented under the Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic (FMP), are necessary to protect the Atlantic group Spanish mackerel resource.

Fixed boundaries for the Atlantic group Spanish mackerel are shown below.

To report violations of commercial trip limits or closures, contact NOAA Fisheries Law Enforcement Division at 727/570-5344 or 1-800/853-1964. NOAA Fisheries, is an agency of the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Additional information on southeastern fisheries may be found on the Web sites of the Gulf of Mexico (<http://www.gulfcouncil.org>) or South Atlantic (<http://www.safmc.nmfs.gov>) Fishery Management Council; they may be contacted by e-mail at [gulf.council@noaa.gov](mailto:gulf.council@noaa.gov), or [safmc@noaa.gov](mailto:safmc@noaa.gov) respectively.

